



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**CLONING AND EXPRESSION OF THE SPIKE PROTEIN OF  
NEPHROPATHOGENIC INFECTIOUS BRONCHITIS VIRUS STRAIN  
MH5365/95**

**YAP MAY LING**

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**MASTER OF SCIENCES  
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**2004**



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**By**

**YAP MAY LING**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

**September 2004**



DEDICATED TO.....

My Late Father,

YAP KAM SANG

My Mother,

CHAN HA MOOI

My Brothers and Sister,

KOON HOI,

KOK HOU,

KOK WAI,

MEI YUEN.

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

**CLONING AND EXPRESSION OF THE SPIKE PROTEIN OF  
NEPHROPATHOGENIC INFECTIOUS BRONCHITIS VIRUS  
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By

**YAP MAY LING**

**July 2004**

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**Faculty: Veterinary Medicine**

Infectious bronchitis is a highly contagious respiratory and kidney disease of poultry. The etiological agent, the prototype coronavirus, infectious bronchitis virus (IBV) is a member of the family *Coronaviridae*. The objective of this research is to isolate S1 protein from nephropathogenic IBV strain MH5365/95. The spike (S1) gene encodes for the S1 surface glycoprotein which is involved in virus attachment and infectivity. In addition, the S1 possesses the main immunological determinants essential for immune response and host protection. Production and isolation of the S1 protein from the rest of viral immunogens is necessary for further subunit vaccine development and protein structure-functional studies. To achieve these, therefore, the S1 gene of the IBV strain MH5365/95 was cloned into *Escherichia coli* expression system and also into the Baculovirus Expression Vector System (BEVS). This is the first study ever conducted in Malaysia in which the viral immunogen of a local IBV strain was cloned and expressed as a recombinant protein in heterologous cell system. The 1.75 kb S1 gene

was amplified from the viral genomic RNA by RT-PCR method. It was cloned into the *E. coli* expression vector, pGEX-2T, and the baculovirus transfer vector, pAcG-2T. The recombinant clones were verified by restriction enzyme analysis, PCR and partial DNA sequencing. The recombinant S1 was expressed as glutathione S-transferase (GST) fusion protein in both the expression systems. In *E. coli* cells, the GST-S1 fusion protein was expressed at a relatively low level despite the optimization studies done. In Western blot analysis using an anti-GST polyclonal antibody, the *E. coli*-derived fusion protein was identified as a protein band having a molecular weight of approximately 90 kDa. Upon co-transfection of the recombinant baculovirus transfer vector with BaculoGold® linearized baculovirus genomic DNA in *Sf9* insect cells, a viable recombinant baculovirus AcNPV (recS1-AcNPV) was verified by PCR and purified through plaque assay. The recS1-AcNPV recombinant baculovirus failed to produce any occlusion bodies in *Sf9* cells consequent upon the replacement of baculoviral polyhedrin gene by S1 gene. In western blot analysis, the *Sf9*-derived GST-S1 fusion protein was identified as a protein band with molecular weight of approximately 105 kDa, reacting with anti-GST polyclonal antibody. The size of the S1 moiety was estimated to be approximately 79 kDa. This result showed that level of glycosylation in the *Sf9*-derived S1 protein was not equal to that of the authentic S1 glycoprotein. Moreover, the same protein was unable to react with the polyclonal antiserum raised against IBV MH5365/95. Thus, further analysis on the glycosylation pattern, conformation and antigenicity of the S1 protein is necessary.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**PENGKLONAN DAN PENGEKSPRESAN PROTEIN PEPAKU VIRUS  
BRONKITIS BERJANGKIT STRAIN MH5365/95 NEFROPATOGENIK**

Oleh

**YAP MAY LING**

**Julai 2004**

**Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Siti Suri Arshad, Ph.D,**

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Bronkitis berjangkit merupakan penyakit pernafasan dan penyakit ginjal paling menular dalam ayam itik. Agen etiologinya, koronavirus prototip, iaitu virus bronkitis berjangkit (IBV) merupakan ahli famili *Coronaviridae*. Objektif penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengasingkan protein S1 daripada virus bronkitis berjangkit strain MH5365/95 nefropatogenik. Gen pepaku (S1) mengekod untuk glikoprotein permukaan S1 yang terlibat dalam pelekapan dan kejangkitan virus. Sambil itu, ia juga mempunyai penentu imunologi utama untuk gerak balas imun dan perlindungan perumah. Penghasilan dan pemencilan protein S1 daripada imunogen virus lain adalah perlu untuk perkembangan vaksin subunit dan kajian struktur-fungsi protein seterusnya. Untuk mencapai matlamat ini, maka gen S1 bagi strain IBV MH5365/95 telah diklonkan ke dalam sistem pengekspresan *Escherichia coli* dan juga ke dalam Sistem Vektor Pengekspresan Bakulovirus (BEVS). Ini merupakan pengajian terulung yang dijalankan di Malaysia di mana imunogen virus strain IBV tempatan diklon dan diekspreskan sebagai protein rekombinan di dalam sistem sel heterologos. Gen S1 bersaiz 1.75 kb ini telah

diamplifikasi daripada RNA genom virus melalui kaedah RT-PCR. Gen ini diklonkan ke dalam vektor pengekspresan *E. coli*, pGEX-2T, dan vektor pemindahan bakulovirus, pAcG-2T. Klon rekombinan ini telah disah betul melalui analisis enzim penyekat, PCR dan penjujukan DNA separa. S1 rekombinan telah diekspres sebagai protein lakuran glutathion S-transferase (GST) dalam kedua-dua sistem pengekspresan tersebut. Dalam sel *E. coli*, protein lakuran GST-S1 telah diekspres pada aras agak rendah walaupun kajian pengoptimuman telah dijalankan. Dalam analisis pembloatan Western mengguna antibodi poliklon anti-GST, protein lakuran terbitan *E. coli* ini telah dikenal pasti sebagai jalur protein yang berat molekulnya lebih kurang 90 kDa. Selepas ko-pentransjangkitan vektor pemindahan bakulovirus rekombinan dengan DNA genom bakulovirus linear BaculoGold<sup>®</sup> ke dalam sel serangga *Sf9*, satu bakulovirus rekombinan AcNPV (recS1-AcNPV) telah disah betul melalui PCR dan dituliskan melalui assai plak. Bakulovirus rekombinan recS1-AcNPV gagal untuk menghasilkan jasad oklusi dalam sel *Sf9* kerana telah berlaku penggantian gen polihedrin bakulovirus dengan gen S1. Dalam analisis pembloatan Western, protein lakuran GST-S1 terbitan *Sf9* telah dikenal pasti sebagai jalur protein berat molekul lebih kurang 105 kDa yang bertindak balas dengan antibodi poliklon anti-GST. Saiz moiety S1 ini dianggarkan lebih kurang 79 kDa. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan yang aras pengglikosilatan dalam protein S1 terbitan *Sf9* tidak sama dengan glikoprotein S1 asli. Kajian menunjukkan bahawa protein yang sama tidak mampu untuk bertindak balas dengan antiserum poliklon yang dihasilkan terhadap IBV MH5365/95. Dengan demikian, analisis lanjutan terhadap pola pengglikosilatan, konformasi dan keantigenan protein S1 adalah perlu.



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I certify that an Examination Committee met on **23th July 2004** to conduct the final examination of **Yap May Ling** on her **Master of Science** thesis entitled "Cloning and Expression of the Spike Protein of Nephropathogenic Infectious Bronchitis Virus Strain MH5365/95" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

---

**YAP MAY LING**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
APPROVAL	ix
DECLARATION	xi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF PLATES	xviii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xx
 <b>CHAPTER</b>	
 <b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	 <b>1</b>
1.1 Infectious Bronchitis	1
1.2 Objectives of the Study	4
 <b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	 <b>6</b>
2.1 Infectious Bronchitis Virus (IBV)	6
2.1.1 Taxonomic Classification	6
2.1.2 History and Distribution of IBV	7
2.1.3 IBV and the Malaysia Scenario	8
2.1.4 Structure of IBV Virions	8
2.1.5 IBV Genome and Encoded Proteins	10
2.2 IBV Strain MH5365/95	12
2.2.1 Clinical History and Pathogenicity	12
2.2.2 The Molecular Characteristics of S Gene	14
2.3 The Spike (S) Glycoprotein	15
2.3.1 Structural and Molecular Characteristics	15
2.3.2 The Significance of the S1 Glycoprotein	17
2.4 Expression of Recombinant Proteins in Prokaryotic <i>Escherichia coli</i> Expression System	19
2.4.1 Principles of Prokaryotic <i>E. coli</i> Expression System	19
2.4.2 Advantages of Prokaryotic <i>E. coli</i> Expression System	20
2.4.3 Plasmid as the Expression Vector	21
2.4.4 <i>E. coli</i> as Host Strain	23
2.5 The Biology of Baculovirus	24
2.5.1 Baculovirus Classification	24
2.5.2 Baculovirus Virion and Genome Structure	25

2.6	Baculovirus Expression Vector System (BEVS)	28
2.6.1	Principles of BEVS	28
2.6.2	Advantages of the BEVS	28
2.6.3	Baculovirus Transfer Vector	30
2.6.4	Insect Cell Lines	31
2.6.5	Insect Cell Culture Medium	32
<b>3</b>	<b>PROPAGATION AND MORPHOLOGICAL STUDY OF IBV MH5365/95</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1	Introduction	35
3.2	Materials and Methods	36
3.2.1	Propagation and Purification of IBV	36
3.2.2	Negative Contrast Electron Microscopy of IBV	38
3.3	Results	39
3.3.1	Morphology of IBV MH5365/95	39
3.4	Discussion	42
3.4.1	Purification of IBV	42
3.4.2	Electron Microscopy of IBV	43
<b>4</b>	<b>ISOLATION AND CLONING OF S1 GENE OF IBV MH5365/95</b>	<b>45</b>
4.1	Introduction	45
4.2	Materials and Methods	46
4.2.1	Viral RNA Extraction	46
4.2.2	Isolation and Amplification of S1 Gene	47
4.2.3	Cloning of S1 Gene into <i>Escherichia coli</i> Expression Vector (pGEX-2T) and Baculovirus Transfer Vector (pAcG-2T)	50
4.2.4	Delivery of DNA into <i>Escherichia coli</i> cells	53
4.2.5	Screening and Verification of Putative Recombinant Clones	54
4.3	Results	59
4.3.1	RT-PCR Amplification	59
4.3.2	Transformation	59
4.3.3	Screening and Verification of Putative Recombinant Clones	61
4.4	Discussion	76
4.4.1	RT-PCR Amplification of S1 Gene	76
4.4.2	Cloning of S1 Gene	79
4.4.3	Transformation	80
<b>5</b>	<b>EXPRESSION OF RECOMBINANT IBV S1 PROTEIN IN <i>Escherichia coli</i></b>	<b>81</b>
5.1	Introduction	81
5.2	Materials and Methods	83
5.2.1	Transformation of the Recombinant Plasmid into	

	competent <i>E. coli</i> Cell Strain BL21	83
5.2.2	Small Scale Recombinant Protein Expression in <i>E. coli</i> cell for Screening Purpose	83
5.2.3	Recombinant Protein Analysis	84
5.2.4	Study of Recombinant S1 Protein Expression in <i>E. coli</i>	87
5.3	Results	89
5.3.1	Western Blot Analysis	89
5.3.2	Induction of Recombinant Protein Expression by Different IPTG Concentrations	89
5.3.4	Recombinant Protein Expression in Different <i>E. coli</i> Strains	92
5.4	Discussion	94
<b>6</b>	<b>EXPRESSION OF RECOMBINANT IBV S1 PROTEIN BY BACULOVIRUS EXPRESSION VECTOR SYSTEM (BEVS)</b>	<b>103</b>
6.1	Introduction	103
6.2	Materials and Methods	105
6.2.1	Insect Cell Culture	105
6.2.2	Co-transfection of the Recombinant Baculovirus Transfer Vector and the Linearised Baculoviral (AcMNPV) DNA into <i>Sf9</i> Insect Cells	107
6.2.3	Plaque Purification of Recombinant Baculovirus	110
6.2.4	Identification and Verification of Recombinant Baculovirus	111
6.2.5	Preparation of High Titer Recombinant Virus Stock	113
6.3	Results	114
6.3.1	<i>Sf9</i> Insect Cell Morphology and Growth Characteristics	114
6.3.2	Construction of the Recombinant Baculovirus by Co-transfection	114
6.3.3	Identification of Recombinant Baculovirus	117
6.3.4	Viral Plaque Assay	122
6.3.5	Western Blot Analysis	122
6.4	Discussion	129
<b>7</b>	<b>GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION</b>	<b>137</b>
7.1	General discussion	137
7.2	Conclusion	142
7.3	Future Recommendations	143
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>145</b>
	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>157</b>
1	Cloning and Transformation Efficiency in <i>E. coli</i> strain JM105	157
2	Cloning and Transformation Efficiency in <i>E. coli</i> strain JM109	158
3	Partial S1 Gene Nucleotide Sequence Derived From	



	rS1-GEX Plasmid	159
4	Partial S1 Gene Nucleotide Sequence Derived From rS1-AcG Plasmid	160
5	Deduced Amino Acid Sequence of IBV MH5365/95 S1 Gene	161
6	Partial Nucleotide and Deduced Amino Acid Sequence of IBV MH5365/95 S1 Gene (rS1-GEX)	162
7	Partial Nucleotide and Deduced Amino Acid Sequence of IBV MH5365/95 S1 Gene (rS1-AcG)	163
8	pGEX-2T Vector Map	164
9	pAcG-2T Vector Map	165
BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR		166
PUBLICATIONS		167

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
4.1	List of primers used for RT-PCR, PCR and sequencing analysis	48
4.2	PCR verifications of the recombinant plasmid rS1-GEX and rS1-AcG by using different pairs of primers	58
5.1	Genotype of different <i>E. coli</i> strains for recombinant GST-S1 fusion protein production in prokaryotic system	97
6.1	Potential <i>N</i> -linked glycosylation sites in the S1 gene of IBV MH5365/95	132

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	Schematic diagram of a coronavirus structure	9
2.2	Schematic diagram of genomic organization of IBV	11
2.3	The baculovirus life cycle <i>in vivo</i>	27
4.1	Expression cassettes of the two individual expression plasmids for the synthesis of GST-S1 fusion protein in <i>E. coli</i> and baculovirus-infected <i>Sf9</i> cells	62
4.2	Schematic diagram showing the locations of the primers used in PCR verification of recombinant rS1-GEX plasmid	66
4.3	Schematic diagram showing the locations of the primers used in PCR verification of recombinant rS1-AcG baculovirus transfer vector	70
4.4	Analysis of nucleotide sequence of recombinant S1 gene obtained from partial sequencing at the 5' end of recombinant rS1-GEX and rS1-AcG vector systems	74
4.5	Analysis of partial deduced amino acid sequence of the recombinant S1 gene cloned into the rS1-GEX and rS1-AcG vector systems as compared to the documented deduced S1 amino acid sequence	75
6.1	Co-transfection	116

## LIST OF PLATES

Plate		Page
3.1	Morphology of IBV MH5365/95 in negatively stained preparation	40
3.2	Pleomorphic morphology of IBV MH5365/95	41
4.1	RT-PCR using Titan® one tube RT-PCR system detected on 1% agarose gel stained with ethidium bromide	60
4.2	Recombinant <i>E. coli</i> expression vector (rS1-GEX) before and after insertion of S1 gene	63
4.3	Recombinant baculovirus transfer vector (rS1-AcG) before and after insertion of S1 gene	64
4.4	RE and PCR analysis of the recombinant plasmid rS1-GEX	67
4.5	RE analysis of the recombinant baculovirus transfer vector rS1-AcG	68
4.6	PCR analysis of recombinant baculovirus transfer vector rS1-AcG	71
5.1	Western blotting of <i>E. coli</i> expression system with anti-GST polyclonal antibody	90
5.2	Induction of recombinant GST-S1 fusion protein expressed in <i>E. coli</i> BL21 by different IPTG final concentrations	91
5.3	Western blotting analysis of recombinant GST-S1 fusion protein expressed in different <i>E. coli</i> strains with anti-GST polyclonal antibody	93
6.1	Morphology of control negative <i>Sf9</i> insect cells at 2 days-post-seeding at two magnifications	115
6.2	Morphology of recS1-AcNPV infected <i>Sf9</i> insect cells at various time point	118
6.3	Morphology of infected <i>Sf9</i> cell morphology at 2 dpi	119

6.4	PCR verification of recombinant baculovirus AcNPV produced after co-transfection	121
6.5	Viral plaque assay showing putative recombinant AcNPV (recS1-AcNPV) produced from co-transfection	123
6.6	Western blotting of recombinant GST-S1 fusion protein expressed in <i>Sf9</i> insect cells using anti-GST polyclonal antibody	124
6.7	Further estimating the molecular weight of the recombinant GST-S1 fusion protein expressed in <i>Sf9</i> insect cells	126
6.8	Western blotting of recombinant S1 protein expressed in insect cells using IBV 5365/95 antiserum (1:500)	127
6.9	SDS-PAGE analysis of recombinant S1 protein expressed in insect cells	128

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

~	approximately
AcNPV	<i>Autographa californica</i> nuclear polyhedrosis virus
AcMNPV	<i>Autographa californica</i> multiple nucleocapsid per virus
AF	allantoic fluid
AMV	avian myeloblastosis virus
ATP	adenosine triphosphate
BCIP	5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl-phosphate
BEVS	Baculovirus Expression Vector System
bp	base pair
BSA	bovine serum albumin
BV	budded virus
°C	degrees centigrade
CDNB	1-chloro-2,4-dinitrobenzene
cm <sup>2</sup>	centimeter square
CPE	cytopathic effect
DMSO	dimethyl sulfoxide
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
dpi	day-post-infection
dNTP	deoxyribonucleotide triphosphate
DTT	dithiothreitol
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
ECV	extracellular virus
FBS	fetal bovine serum
GST	glutathione S-transferase
GV	granulosis virus
h	hour
HA	haemagglutination
HI	haemagglutination-inhibition
hpi	hour-post-infection
IB	infectious bronchitis
IBV	infectious bronchitis virus
IgG (H+L)	immunoglobulin G (high and low)
IPTG	isopropyl 1-thio- $\beta$ -D-galactoside
kb	kilobase pair
kDa	kilodalton
LB	Luria Bertani
M	membrane
M	molar
$\mu$ g	microgram
$\mu$ l	microliter
$\mu$ m	micrometer
mA	milliampere
MAb	monoclonal antibody



MCS	multiple cloning site
mg	milligram
min	minute
ml	milliliter
mm	millimeter
mM	millimolar
m.o.i.	multiplicity of infection
MOPS	3- <i>N</i> -morpholino propanesulfonic acid
mRNA	messenger ribonucleic acid
MTA	methylamine tungstate
MW	molecular weight
N	nucleocapsid
NBT	nitro blue tetrazolium
nm	nanometer
NOV	nonoccluded virus
NPV	nuclear polyhedrosis virus
NTE	sodium chloride-tris-EDTA buffer
OB	occlusion body(ies)
OD	optical density
ORF	open reading frame
ori	origin of replication
OV	occluded virus
%	percentage
PAb	polyclonal antibody
PBS	phosphate buffer saline
PCR	polymerase chain reaction
PFU	plaque forming unit
<i>polh</i>	polyhedrin
PVDF	polyvinyl difluoride
RBS	ribosome binding site
RE	restriction enzyme
RNA	ribonucleic acid
rpm	round per minute
rS1-AcG	recombinant plasmid with S1 gene, derived from pAcG-2T vector
rS1-GEX	recombinant plasmid with S1 gene, derived from pGEX-2T vector
RT	room temperature
RT-PCR	reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction
s	second
S	spike
S1	spike subunit 1
S2	spike subunit 2
SDGC	sucrose density gradient centrifugation
SDS	sodium dodecyl sulphate
SDS-PAGE	sodium dodecyl sulphate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis
<i>Sf9</i>	<i>Spodoptera frugiperda</i> cell line
TAE	tris-acetate-EDTA buffer

TE	tris-EDTA buffer
TEM	transmission electron microscopy
TEMED	<i>N,N,N',N'</i> -tetramethylethylene diamine
U	unit
UV	ultraviolet
V	volt
VN	virus-neutralization
v/v	volume per volume
w/v	weight per volume



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Infectious Bronchitis

The poultry industry constitutes a significant sector in world agriculture. In United States, more than 8 billion birds are produced yearly with a value exceeding \$20 billion (Sharma, 1999). In Malaysia, 644.56 thousand million tan of poultry meat and 6,534 million of chicken or duck eggs were consumed in year 2001 (Department of Veterinary Services Malaysia, 2002). The industry relies on intensive farming to supply meat and eggs at relatively low cost.

Infectious bronchitis virus (IBV), a member of family *Coronaviridae* and prototype of coronavirus, is the etiological agent of infectious bronchitis (IB), a highly contagious respiratory, kidney and urogenital tract disease in chickens. IB is prevalent in all countries with intensive poultry industries, with the incidence of infection approaching 100% in most locations (Ignjatovic and Sapats, 2000). It has a significant economic impact; in broilers, production losses are due to poor weight gains, condemnation at processing and mortality, whilst in laying birds, losses are due to suboptimal egg production and downgrading of eggs.